

Executive Action Briefing
ASAP Strategic Focus Area
The Need for Data Driven Decision Making and Policy Development

Background

On February 28, 2008 the Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership (ASAP) examined the data driven decision making and policy development strategic focus area. Emphasizing the need to establish fiscal controls and to eliminate duplication of effort, ASAP and its member agencies need accurate data that can guide the development of policy and influence funding decisions. From the February ASAP meeting emerged a series of recommendations that will enhance the capacity of the state to make data driven decisions. ASAP will coordinate with its member agencies to implement actions that will build the state's capacity to coordinate data collection and to guide policy and funding decisions based on accurate and timely data.

Mission: Identify all statewide data sources and seek to provide coordination in data collection relevant to substance abuse prevention, enforcement and treatment and provide an on-going and systematic analysis of data to guide policy development and funding decisions.

PRIORITY NEED

Problem #1: Fragmented data collection silos that make it difficult to synthesize and analyze data that can guide or influence policy and budget decisions.

Goal: Identify all relevant data collection systems in order to provide a centralized data repository to inform ASAP in their policy development and budgetary decisions.

Recommended Action Steps:

- ✓ Conduct an inventory of all data collection systems that measure substance abuse consumption behavior and the consequences resulting from such use.
- ✓ Identify gaps in data collection efforts.
- ✓ Provide an annual data analysis of substance abuse problems utilizing existing data collection sources.
- ✓ Support a data analyst to coordinate data collection and to analyze existing data.
- ✓ Develop a dedicated clearinghouse that collects and analyzes substance use/abuse data.

Responsible Agency: ASAP will provide direction to relevant agencies and to provide instruction to the Substance Abuse Epidemiology Work Group to begin an analysis of existing data sources.

Problem #2: There is a shortage of, and in some cases, a lack of information concerning sub-state estimates of substance-specific use and abuse among adults that are not involved with any of the state systems.

Goal: Identify data sources, agencies and relevant questions to determine estimates of substance abuse behavior outside of that already collected by state systems.

Recommended Action Steps:

- ✓ Identify agencies or organizations providing substance abuse services that are not already captured.
- ✓ Report results of this survey and provide an assessment of the consistency of reporting in non-state systems.
- ✓ Provide recommendations for data collection and analysis.
- ✓ Establish a mechanism for collecting general population data on adult substance use and abuse.

Responsible Agency: ASAP will consult with the Substance Abuse Epidemiology Work Group on relevant strategies for identifying non-state systems or providers.

Problem #3: There is currently no accurate or consistent instrument for measuring substance abuse treatment capacity or for measuring the prevalence of the co-occurrence of substance abuse and involvement in the child welfare system.

Recommended Action Steps:

- ✓ Collaborate with the responsible agencies working on treatment issues within the child welfare system to establish measures for determining the prevalence of the co-occurrence of substance abuse.
- ✓ Identify national and state models for assessing treatment capacity and adopt appropriate instruments for Arizona.

Responsible Agency: ASAP and the Department of Health Services, the Department of Economic Security, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System.